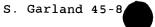## Claims

1. In a communication system including a switch coupled with Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) and an application server coupled with the switch, a method for sending a server-specified message to the CPE without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE, the method comprising the steps of:

    sending a request from the application server to the switch; and

    sending, based upon the request, a predetermined server-specified message from the switch to the CPE without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE, wherein CPE is not rung and the predetermined message is not affected by the features of the line associated with the CPE.

2.   A method for sending a message in accordance with claim 1, wherein the step of sending a predetermined server-specified message from the switch to the CPE comprises the step of forwarding the request received

5   from the application to the CPE.

3.   A method for sending a message in accordance with claim 1, the method further comprising the step of sending a return message from the CPE to the switch

10   without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE.

4.   A method for sending a message in accordance with claim 3, the method further comprising the step of

15   sending a status message based upon the return message from the switch to the application server without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE.

20   5.   A method for sending a message in accordance with claim 1, wherein the step of sending a predetermined server-specified message from the switch to the CPE comprises the step of opening an analog path to send the predetermined server-specified message to the CPE.

6. A switch comprising:

  means for receiving a request from an application server;

  means for determining the type of CPE message based upon the request; and

  means, responsive to the type of message, for sending a predetermined message to a CPE coupled to the switch without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE, the predetermined message not being affected by features assigned to the CPE.

7.   A switch in accordance with claim 6, wherein the means for sending the predetermined server-specified message to the CPE comprises means for forwarding the request from the application server to the CPE without
5   setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE.

8.   A switch in accordance with claim 6, the switch further comprising means for receiving a return message
10   from the CPE to the switch without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE.

9.   A switch in accordance with claim 8, the switch further comprising means for sending a status message
15   based upon the return message from the switch to the application server.

10.   A switch in accordance with claim 6, wherein the means for sending a predetermined message to the CPE
20   comprises means for sending a message to the CPE using suppressed ringing capabilities.

11. A switch comprising:

an input port effective in receiving a request from an application server;

a processor effective in determining the type of
5   message based upon the request; and

an output port effective in sending, responsive to the type of request, a predetermined message to a CPE coupled to the switch without setting up a call path between the application server, the switch, and the CPE
10 and not being affected by features of the CPE.

12.   A switch in accordance with claim 11, the switch
further comprising a CPE port effective in receiving a
return message from the CPE without setting up a call
path between the application server and the CPE.

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13.   A switch in accordance with claim 12, the switch
further comprising an acknowledgment port effective in
sending a status message from the switch to the
application server, the status message based upon the
10   return message.

14.   A switch in accordance with claim 11, wherein the
output port is effective in sending a message utilizing
suppressed ringing capabilities to the CPE.

15.   A switch comprising:

     an input port effective in receiving a server-specified message from an application server; and
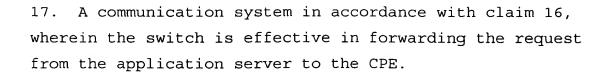
     an output port effective in sending the server-
5   specified message, wherein the server-specified message is sent to a CPE coupled to the switch without setting up a call path between the application server, the switch, and the CPE and not being affected by features of the CPE.

16.   A communication system for sending predetermined messages to Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) without setting up an end-to-end call path, the communication system comprising:

5   an application server;

Customer Premises Equipment (CPE); and

a switch coupled to the application server and the CPE, the switch effective in receiving a request from the application server and effective in sending, based upon

10   the request, a predetermined message to the CPE without setting up an end-to-end call path between the CPE and the application server, wherein the predetermined message is not affected by features of the CPE.

17.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16, wherein the switch is effective in forwarding the request from the application server to the CPE.

5   18.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16, the switch further being effective in receiving a return message from the CPE without setting up a call path between the application server and the CPE.

10   19.   A communication system in accordance with claim 18, the switch further being effective in sending a status message based upon the return message to the application server.

15   20.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16, wherein the CPE comprises a modem.

21.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16, wherein the CPE comprises a computer.

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22.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16, wherein the CPE comprises a data communications terminal.

23.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16,
25   wherein the application server comprises a computer.

24.   A communication system in accordance with claim 16, wherein the application server comprises a data communications device.